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From Page:
1
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SL seeks to join elite 3 in Iowa's Great Places plan

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108

Storm Lake will be among the initial communities seeking to be named "Iowa Great Places" later this year.

The new program is an initiative proposed by Gov. Tom Vilsack and Lt. Gov. Sally Pederson. Ten public meetings

around the state in May and June launched the program.

It is designed to bring the resources of state government to help local people build capacity in communities, regions, neighborhoods or districts that cultivate unique and authentic qualities that make places special.

These include "engaging experiences; rich, diverse populations and cultures; a vital, creative economy; clean and accessible natural and built environments; well-designed infrastructure; and a shared attitude of optimism that welcomes new ideas, based on a diverse and inclusive cultural mosaic."

Great Places / See Page 7A

Great Places: Stiff competition, but appeal of state resources in program

Continued from page 1A

Communities have until July 1 to apply to the Great Places team made-up of representatives from 18 state agencies.

Storm Lake has filed an application and is awaiting for a "coach" assignment.

Throughout July and August, Great Places "coaches" will then work with each place to get their offers ready for a final selection presentation in September. By October 1, a citizen advisory council appointed by Vilsack will help select the three pilot Great Places.

Negotiation of partnership agreements with those places will take place through the fall, with final agreements by December 31, 2005.

"We are expecting a very competitive situation," city staff member Mike Wilson told the Pilot-Tribune. "With just three pilot places to be named in October, there could literally be a field of hundreds of locations that would want to be one of them."

